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RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA 3338
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5970
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RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS COLL

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SUBJECT: Crew (C1/D) Visa outreach in Jakarta

REF: 09 Jakarta 00000815

¶11. SUMMARY: Embassy Jakarta's Consular section met with and briefed shipping agents who participate in our Crew Visa Program (CVP) as a follow-on to our crew and transit (C1/D) visa validity study (reftel). We thanked the agents for their adherence to guidelines that see minimal abuse of C1/D visas, and received feedback in return. Jakarta anticipates using the CVP as a model for a Student Visa Program (SVP), in furtherance of our goal to double the number of Indonesian students in the United States. END SUMMARY.

¶12. Thirty-one shipping agents attended our briefing on August 12. Merchant seamen, typically cleaners and waiters on U.S.-based Caribbean cruise lines, constitute approximately 20 percent of our 60,000 nonimmigrant visa applicants per year, and contribute \$252 million in annual foreign exchange earnings to Indonesia. All of the popular Caribbean cruise lines rely on Indonesian seamen, and a well run CVP benefits American vacationers, cruise lines, and Indonesia.

¶13. To facilitate this high volume, economically lucrative visa classification, Jakarta's CVP includes vetting crew manning agencies for special C1/D visa processing. The CVP helps reduce opportunities for fraud and facilitates the efficient adjudication of C-1/D visas, as the applicants' employment contract and training have been pre-verified. The CVP requires extensive documentation from manning agencies prior to registration as well as on site inspections of their offices, and maintains close coordination with all approved agents. Any lapses in screening are closely monitored, and can result in temporary suspensions of agents until gaps are fixed.

¶14. CG kicked off the CVP briefing by emphasizing its success in securing, standardizing, and streamlining the C1/D visa process for everyone's benefit. Conoff stressed the importance of continued cooperation and adherence to program regulations, since manning agencies are held responsible for misuse of visas on the part of their applicants, fraud on the part of their staff and/or negligence in screening procedures.

¶15. The agents expressed pleasure with the CVP and its benefits to all. Several agents noted that Embassy Jakarta's CVP is more efficient than similar crew visa programs run by other embassies. A few newer agents requested clearer guidance on tracking requirements for seamen after they join their ships, and others proposed sending mandatory reports to the embassy every several months noting the current status of their crew. The agents expressed gratitude for the Consular's section's quick response to emails submitted to the JakSea@state.gov dedicated email inbox.

¶16. COMMENT: We are pleased with the success of our CVP, borne out by a recent validity study (reftel) that found a minimal 0.27 percent C1/D visa abuse rate. Our goal is to increase the pool of eligible visa applicants, who may qualify for visas in a secure and efficient process. Our CVP does so for merchant marine crewmen. We hope to replicate CVP by identifying and working with reputable

agents for U.S. universities and junior colleges to create a similarly robust Student Visa Program (SVP).

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